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Competence and Dependence in Children: Parental Treatment of Four-Year-Old Girls. Final Report.

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This study investigated the relationships between parental treatment of thirty-two 4-year-old girls and the girls' relative competence and dependence. The conduct of the girls and their parents was observed. The parents' child-rearing attitudes were assessed from questionnaires. The following classification scheme was created: parents who treated their child as an adult would be Type I: those who treated their child as an infant, Type II: and those who treated their child as a 4-year-old, Type III. It was hypothesized that (1) parents of dependent children would be rated higher on both the Type I and Type II variables than parents of competent children, (2) parents of competent children would be rated higher on the Type III variable than parents of dependent children, and (3) discrepancy between child-rearing practices and child rearing philosophy would be more evident in parents of dependent children. Hypothesis (1) was supported by the data on fathers, but no significant differences were found between the mothers. Hypothesis (2) was supported for mothers, but no significant differences were found between the fathers. The data for hypothesis (3) indicated that no significant differences for either mothers or fathers existed. (WD)

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FINAL REPORT

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William Ford Clapp

October 13, 1968

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I

INTRODUCTION

Problem

This study involved the investigation of the relationships among parental treatment of four-year-old girls and the children's relative competence and dependence. It is a companion to a similar study of four-year-old boys and their parents (Clapp, 1966).

Background

Childhood dependence has been widely researched in the belief that it is a crucial aspect of the development of the child into a competent member of society. Dependence is believed to be involved in the processes and dynamics of compliance, conformity, persuasibility, influencibility, and the internalization of moral principles and values. As such, it represents a possible key to character development, a focal issue in our rapidly changing society in an accelerated scientific age.

Competence in children is a relatively new variable for which there is, as yet, little research literature available. Competence was chosen as a contrasting variable for dependence, rather than independence (the presumed opposite of dependence), after it was found in an earlier study (see Clapp, 1966) that its use eliminates some of the methodological problems inherent in the separation of appropriate independence from rebellious, negative, or pathological independence.

From a detailed conceptualization of dependence and competence (Clapp, 1966) certain types of parental treatment of children were found to be logically or conceptually related to the development and perpetuation of dependence and competence in the child.

It is believed that how the parent treats the child is not the same as the child-rearing practices the parent engages in, nor the same as the parents' personality traits per se. Child-rearing practices and parental traits could correlate with the way the parent treats the child, but there are no necessary or well demonstrated relationships among these classifications of parental variables in the research to date.

Variables characterized in terms of "parental treatment" of the child bear a resemblence to the conceptualization of variables employed by Bijou and Baer (1961) and other developmental researchers associated with the Skinnerian position. However, there are

more dissimilarities than can be enumerated in this paper (see Clapp, 1966). The resemblence of the Skinnerian developmentalists' work and this researcher's use of treatment variables resides only in the common empirical focus and in the emphasis upon parent-child interaction.

Since there are as yet few studies which have focused upon treatment variables (in contrast to child-rearing or trait variables), the literature survey which follows includes a conglomerate of child-rearing practices, parental traits and assessments of the parent which only tend to border on treatment variables (as used by this researcher) as they relate to the child's dependence and competence. The reasons for the inclusion of parental variables only indirectly related to the treatment variables employed in this study are:

1. To support the contention that child-rearing variables are weak predictions compared to parental trait variables.
2. To support the claim that dependence and competence have not been successfully related to parent variables.
3. To give the reader a representative sample of the research results concerning child dependence and competence to help him appreciate the magnitude of the problem.
4. Because the three types of parental treatment of the child overlap conceptually with such parental trait variables as warmth, coldness, permissiveness, restrictiveness, and various child-rearing practices.
5. Because there is essentially no literature which assesses parental types of treatment in the sense used in this study and its relation to the dependence or competence of the child.

Literature Review

Child-rearing Practices Related to the Child's Dependence. An extensive analysis of specific child-rearing practices was first undertaken by Sears, Whiting, Nowles, and Sears in 1953 and followed up in 1957 (Sears, Maccoby and Levin) and in 1965 (Sears, Rau and Alpert). In the earlier study, Sears, et al., (1953) studied a sample of 40 preschool children (20 girls and 20 boys) by a time-sampling technique in the nursery, and the parents by interview techniques. They found dependence in both boys and girls to be positively related to the severity of weaning, although they failed to replicate this finding in their 1957 study. It is possible that this was due to their use of parental report for measurement of the child's dependence in the second (1957) study. The authors, however, suggest the low reliability of parental reports as the possible reason for the discrepant findings. No relation between toilet training practices was derived for dependence in either study. Sears, et al. (1953) suggest a critical period notion as explanation for the differential effects of the parents' treatment of weaning and toilet training and the child's dependence, although this notion was not tested in either of the later studies (Sears,

et al., 1957, 1965). In addition, Sears and associates (1953) found that rigid feeding schedules were related to dependence for girls but not for boys.

Sewell and Mussen (1952), in a well designed study of 162 five- and six-year-old rural children (from unbroken American middle class homes) and their parents, revealed almost no significant relationship among any aspects of infant training and any aspects of the child's adjustment (including dependence). The one exception was that if toilet training was delayed, the child was better adjusted, a finding in direct contradiction to the Sears, et al. (1953, 1957) reports for this variable.

In a well conceived study of 25 Jewish urban lower middle class families attending a mental health clinic, Behrens (1954) assessed both maternal attitudes and maternal practices in child-rearing. She analyzed the maternal role, the consistency of treatment of the child, overprotection, and the mother's tendency to adapt her discipline to the needs of the child rather than following practices. Behrens (1954) found that while the attitudes of the mother do relate to the child's behavior, the maternal practices (treatment) do not. She reports that the quality of the child's adjustment is dependent upon his total interaction with his mother ("Total Mother Person") and not upon any specific social practice. The Behrens (1954) study employed an intensive interview with the mother to probe her child-rearing practices. She used the California Test of Personality (Form A, given by a trained clinician to the child) and teachers' ratings of the child to assess the child variables. The demonstrated poor validity and reliability of the reports of children of ages six and seven could explain the dearth of relationships educed from this study. This study, again, was not based upon direct observational data for the child variables, but upon self reports and interviews.

This represents only a small sample of the studies attempting to relate specific child-rearing practices to the child's dependence which have contributed to the conclusions by Johnson and Medinnus (1965) and Watson (1965) that this type of variable seems to be essentially unrelated to the child's dependence.

Parental Traits Related to the Child's Dependence. On the basis of the paucity of relationships among the specific child-rearing practices and the child's dependence (and for other reasons), many researchers have focused upon more global trait type variables. Among more popular parental traits studied have been parental warmth (hostility), persuasiveness (restrictiveness), authoritarianism, overprotectiveness, nurturance and rejection.

One of the early efforts toward documenting the effects of parental warmth was made by Ribble (1943) in a still popular book entitled The Rights of Infants. Her argument was that both the physicaland

psychological well-being of an infant depend upon close emotional and physical contact with a mother, especially during the early life of the child. Pinneau (1950) and Watson (1965) have criticized her work rather severely, pointing to the weak empirical substantiation for her conclusions, but the child-rearing public has continued to read her book.

In an extreme groups design, Watson (1957) compared warm families (as nominated by teachers and social workers) which were also either especially restrictive or permissive. He found that warm, restrictive parents had more dependent and incompetent children (less creative, less persistent, high in fantasy aggression) than did warm, permissive parents.

The remaining studies concerning the relation between parental warmth and the child's dependence were either equivocal or showed no relationships. Although Kagan and Moss (1962) did not directly assess parental warmth, they did measure parental hostility, which, as used in that study, was similar to coldness or the lack of warmth used in other research. Their findings indicated that parental protection and hostility, in combination, produce withdrawal (a type of dependence) as an adult (age 20-29), but only for girls and only if these parental personality traits were predominant within the first three years of the child's life. Of more than ten dependence and dependence related variables tested, these were the only significant findings and, in view of the number of relationships tested, might not hold up under replication.

Several studies have been concerned primarily with the effect of maternal nurturance on later dependence in the child. Goldfarb (1945), Bowlby (1953), Spitz (1951), and Kagan and Moss (1962) all found no significant relationship between maternal nurturance in infancy and later dependence for boys.

Sears and his associates (1957) have provided some support for their contention that dependence in children is related to the parental tactic of withdrawing or threatening to withdraw from a child in response to aggression from the child. However, the independent assessment of independent and dependent variables in that study is quite questionable.

One of the earliest efforts to study permissiveness and restrictiveness was made by Symonds (1939). Although he used the terms dominant and submissive as multidimensional traits, his definitions appear to include both permissiveness and restrictiveness. Dominant parents were described by Symonds as being strong in their control of the child, restrictive, strict, severe in punishment and criticism, and excessive in planning for the child's needs. The submissive parents were characterized as giving lots of freedom, giving in to the child's demands, and as being indulgent, permissive, deserting, neglecting, lax and inconsistent. He found that dominant parents'

children were better socialized, more curious, obedient, neat, generous, polite but sensitive, self conscious, shy and retiring; while submissive parents' children were disobedient, irresponsible, disorderly in the classroom, lacked sustained attention, lacked regular work habits, but were more forward and expressive.

From this early and quite unsophisticated study it appeared that some sensible (and common sense) relationships between parent and child variables might be established. Shortly thereafter, Levy (1943) produced a more precise and careful conceptualization and definition on both the dependent and independent variable sides of the parent-child relationship. In this "case sifting" method, Levy selected pure maternally overprotecting mothers, referring to cases where the child was, at least consciously, wanted by his mother and characterized by excessive contact, infantilization, and prevention of independent behavior (analogous to this writer's Type II parent - see Hypotheses, below). When combined with domination by the parent, this pattern of parental interaction was found to be highly related to dependence in the child. Smith (1958) also disclosed a relationship between maternal overprotection and dependence in the child. One purpose for his study was to compare interview and observation as methods for collecting data bearing upon the mother's treatment of the child. Unfortunately, in this study, as in the Sears, et al. (1957) study, the data for both the mother and child were based on the interview with the mother. As a result, we cannot eliminate the possibility that the mother, who may have been willing to admit to overprotection, might also have perceived her child as needing protection, i.e. dependent upon her for protection.

In their thirty-year longitudinal study, Kagan and Moss (1962) explored the relation between parental restrictiveness and the child's dependence. Their findings were as follows:

1. Restricting the boy between ages three and six was related to dependence at ages three through seven. This result did not hold up into adulthood and was not significant for girls.
2. Early restriction was related to greater inhibition than was later restriction for both boys and girls.
3. If the mother restricted the boy early, she did not restrict him later, whereas, with girls, it was more likely for her to show maternal restrictiveness in both early and late childhood.
4. Dependency reinforced by the mother increased the dependency of the child at any given age, but not for the later periods studied.
5. Protection of the son (but not the daughter) during the first three years of life was related to passivity at ages six through ten. However, protection between ages three through six did not produce the same degree of passivity at ages six to ten.

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Kagan and Moss (1962, p. 214) stated that the maternal behaviors studied were not highly predictive of adult dependence, especially in men. The best predictor of dependence at a later age for men was their dependence at the prior assessment age period. The results indicated, according to Kagan and Moss (1962, p. 214), that "dependent behavior is simply not a function of the degree of maternal protection or restriction placed upon the child."

Again it was difficult to summarize these findings. If there is a consistent pattern to these sets of results, it is that dependence in children is complexly determined but may be related to the permissiveness and restrictiveness of the parents.

Wittenborn, et al. (1956) asked 114 five-year-olds and 81 first graders (adopted by their families) a series of interview questions about their dependence upon their parents in various family situations. On the basis of a questionnaire given to the child's mother, the extent of maternal rejection was significantly correlated ($r = .30$, $p < .05$) with self reported dependence upon adults. In a study of 56 nursery school children, Baldwin (1949) found that children of indulgent parents were significantly less active, less aggressive and less socially successful than children from democratic (warm-permissive) homes. Unfortunately, the parental variables, again, were not clearly described or characterized, making comparison of these findings to those of the other studies difficult. McCord, McCord and Howard (1961) reported that lack of cohesion, as well as rejection in the family, increases the child's dependence as do strict supervision and highly authoritarian child-rearing practices.

Sears, et al. (1953) found dependent behavior in 40 preschool children (boys and girls) to be related to infantile treatment by the mother (similar to the Type II treatment variable used in this study, see Hypotheses, below). They also found a positive relationship between the amount of punitiveness in the home and dependent tendency in boys. However, they report the reverse relationship for girls, viz., the greater the punishment of the girl, the less the amount of dependent behavior, when the mother is the punishing agent.

In an extensive analysis of the relationships among various parental attitudes (or traits) and the child's adjustment, Burchinal (1958) found almost no significant correlation among parent attitudes and the child's personality, using a variety of paper and pencil instruments to assess the parent and child variables. Burchinal speculated that either the child or parent may have perceived each other differently or both could have been inaccurate in their perceptions. The questionable validity and very low reliability (e.g., one week test-retest reliability for the Rogers (1931) Test of Personality Adjustment) of some of the instruments used and the absence of behavioral and other cross-

validation efforts in this study for the focal variables could have accounted for the findings of no relation between these variables.

In one of the few studies of parent-child interaction, Crandall, Orleans, Preston and Robson (1958) tried to link parent-child interaction to the behavior of the child with peers and adults in other situations in a manner similar to the procedure used in the present research. For children of two different age levels they related ratings of the mother's reinforcement of compliance (dependence) and punishment of noncompliance to the child's interaction with both adults and peers separately. Contrary to a considerable number of other studies (Beller and Turner, 1962; Kagan and Moss, 1960; King, 1959; Lindzey and Goldberg, 1953; Marshall, 1961), they found sex (and also IQ) unrelated to social compliance (a type of dependence; see Clapp, 1966).

In a report on Puerto Rican children, Landy (1959, p. 140) states, "There is no significant relationship between the degree of parental response to dependency (in the child) and dependency behavior." Landy concludes that dependence in children cannot be explained on the basis of psychoanalytic or learning theories (p. 141). Mann (1959) observed 41 nursery school children in free-play activity for 55 two-minute intervals. He found only one of fifteen intercorrelations among maternal attitudes and dependence. Mann used essentially all of the items developed by Beller (1955, 1959) and by Sears, et al. (1953, 1957).

The Child's Competence Related to Parental Variables. Although competence has only lately become a variable of interest to psychologists, the fruits from this research seem to have rewarded the investigators' efforts to a greater degree than in the studies of dependence.

As there is ample evidence that dependence decreases with age, there is similar evidence that competence increases with age. In a very early study, Joel (1936) found that taking off wraps, helping oneself without reminder, facing difficulty without appeals for help, taking initiative, playing constructively, seeing the other child's point of view, all increase with age. The general point is somewhat trivial, although considerable research effort has been required to unravel the specifics.

Another early research finding was that of Baldwin (1949) who reported a strong relationship between the democratic home (warm and permissive environment) and the socially assertive (competent) child. Levin (1958) also found a significant relationship between warm-permissive child-rearing practices and assumption of adult role (competence) in doll play. Levin (1958), in the same study, found maternal sex anxiety (as determined in a three hour interview) and assumption of the adult role were

correlated (r = -.54) as was the use of physical punishment (r = -.38). Bronfenbrenner (1961) also disclosed high levels of responsibility (competence?) observed in the child related to warmth and nurturant (permissive as used by this researcher) attitudes, especially when noted in the mother. Also detected in this study was a relationship between moderately strong discipline, especially from fathers, and the child's assumption of responsibility. However, this result held only for boys. Bronfenbrenner also reported that leadership is facilitated by nurturant and warm relationships with parents, but, again, only for boys. The same factors appeared to discourage leadership in girls and augment dependent behavior. Levy (1943) earlier found that a warm-permissive parental background was related to the ability to control aggression and to express aggression appropriately (competence?).

Kagan and Moss (1962) in their longitudinal study reported the following findings for boys for competence related variables:

1. Protection of the boy during ages 0-3 was correlated with intellectual achievement (competence?) at ages 10-14 (r = .76, p <.001).
2. Aggression to his mother was unrelated to the mother's treatment of the son during his first six years.
3. Maternal hostility between ages 6-10 was related to aggression in the boy for those same ages. Again it was possible that the child's aggression provoked the mother's hostility, as no provision was made in that study to preclude or account for this interpretation of these results.
4. If the mother was hostile toward the child during ages 6-10, there was "disorganization" in those boys and girls between ages 6-10 and 10-14.
5. Protection of the son between ages 0-3 was related to a non-masculine sex role interest (incompetence?) at ages 6-10 (r = .40, p< .05).
6. Although the maternal attitude toward the girl was related to the daughter's adult achievement, maternal attitude toward the son was not related to the son's adult achievement.

Crandall, et al. (1960), using an observation technique to assess maternal affection and the child's preschool achievement efforts (competence), revealed no relations between these two variables. However, if the parent reinforced the achievement efforts, their incidence increased in the nursery. In a study of maternal attitude to independence training, Chance (1951) concluded that mothers who favored earlier independence training had children less adequate in reading and arithmetic progress (incompetence) than mothers who favored later training. Winterbottom (1958) studied the role of the mother in supplying her son with learning experiences that would develop independence and desire for mastery (competence). She reported that boys high in need achievement were given earlier independence training by the

mother, but fewer (although earlier) restrictions on their independence activity. Although the resolution of these apparently contradictory findings is not complete, a study by Medinnus (1961) makes a good start in this direction. In this study, Medinnus reported that homes of well adjusted children received a higher rating on the "Dependency-Encouraging factor" of the Fels Parent Rating Behavior Scale than did the homes of poorly adjusted children. These findings tend to support the Chance (1951) study. More important, possibly, is Medinnus' suggestion that the encouragement of independence could be basic rejection of the child in disguise. Medinnus (1961) also noted the importance of a warm, affectionate or nurturant relationship to the development of independence or competence in the child and the relatively less significant effects of the specific training program adopted by the parent for the child.

On the debit side of the ledger, Hoffman (1963) studied the child's consideration for others (competence) and impulse control (among other variables) and found none of the parental variables studied, including amount of pleasurable non-disciplinary mother-child interaction, related to either of these competence variables. The study was well designed and included observation of the child in the nursery for three and one-half hours over a three month period and an interview with the mother. Burchinal, Hawkes and Gardner (1957b) attempted to link parental attitudes to the child's adjustment and found no significant relations between the parents' responses to the Porter (1954) measure of adjustment and the child's adjustment as measured by the Rogers' (1931) Test of Personality Adjustment. However, both Rogers' (1931) and Porter's (1954) tests were found to have very low test-retest reliability, as noted earlier for the Rogers' (1931) test.

In other miscellaneous findings, Tuma and Levson (1960) report that rebelliousness in boys (a type of incompetence, as defined in this study) was inversely related to the mother's educational attainments. Finally, Glidewell (1961) noted the greatest disturbances (incompetence and dependence) in the child whose mother was projecting, impotent, and paranoid; the next greatest degree of disturbance was in the child whose mother was cautious or reserved about the success of her efforts to deal with the problem (incompetent) child; and the third greatest extent of disturbance in the child if the mother was depressed and felt responsible, but impotent to influence the outcome of her child's behavior.

Summary and Conclusions from the Literature Survey

In this section it was shown that specific parental child-rearing practices bear only tenuous and inconsistent relationships to the child's competence and dependence. Although some of the traits of the parent (especially warmth) are related to the focal

child variables (competence and dependence), the relationships are neither consistent nor particularly impressive.

Some of the reasons for the difficulties that researchers have met in attempting to demonstrate relationships among dependence (or independence), competence (or incompetence) and parental child-rearing practices (or treatment of the child by the parent) after so many research efforts might include the following:

1. The propensity to employ unreliable and unvalidated paper and pencil instruments and to avoid direct observation.
2. Incomplete or inaccurate conceptualization of the variables.
3. The myth that there is a "common element" to all dependent and competent behavior which can be operationalized without sacrificing the meaning of the concept.
4. The belief that if a child is dependent under one set of circumstances, he should be expected to be dependent under all circumstances.
5. The belief that such variables as self-esteem, love, warmth and other so-called mentalistic phenomena are not amenable or worthy of systematic, scientific assessment.
6. The precedent for the tendency to consider personality variables and "needs" as entities or forces "inside the individual" which are "calling out" or demanding satisfaction.
7. The tendency on the part of psychologists to become tied to standardized methodological paradigms in an effort to avoid so-called "contamination" or confounding within and between the sets of independent and dependent variables when such so-called "bias," when properly understood and evaluated, might be of interest in discovering which concepts are able to relate child to parental variables.
8. The belief that the father's treatment of the child is essentially irrelevant, which is implicit in the relative absence of data from fathers in most studies.
9. The failure to acknowledge or assess curvilinear relationships among the variables.

These criticisms, of course, do not apply to all the studies dealing with the relationships between parents and children surveyed above. As was noted, there have been a number of excellent research efforts. The criticism pertains to the general tendencies for developmental child research only.

In an effort to remedy the existing dilemma in our understanding of what part the parent plays in fostering dependence and competence in the child, it was suggested that treatment variables rather than child-rearing practices or parental traits be employed in the study of these relationships. It was further suggested that a more pragmatic methodology (Ossorio, 1966) be used which focuses upon direct observation of both the parent and the child

separately and in interaction with one another. It was also suggested that the total context of the behavior of both the parent and the child must be considered before it will be possible to ferret out the complexly determined relationships between how the parent treats the child and what the child is able to do (his competence and dependence).

Hypotheses

The first set of hypotheses presupposed that the most important contribution to the production of dependence and competence in the four-year-old child is the way the parents treat the behaviors which characterize these traits. It was hypothesized that parents of the dependent children would be characteristically of two varieties, referred to as parental Types I and II, whereas the parents of competent children would be Type III parents.

Type I Parents. Type I parents were described as parents who treat the child as an adult. That is, they engage in excessively early independence training, imposing strong pressures upon the child to induce him to become maximally independent or competent. The rationale that these children were expected to be dependent rather than independent or competent was as follows. If the child is forced at an early age to engage in behaviors and to perform tasks which are beyond his mental, physical, emotional and developmental potentialities at that time, the effect should be to maximize the possibility of failure in the attempted accomplishment of the task or at least to diminish the frequency of success experiences for this child. It was reasoned that a series of failure experiences would be expected to result in a self-appraisal of inadequacy, worthlessness, and in an inordinate fear of the "outside world." As a consequence of this fear, the child might be expected to retreat from that threatening world outside to the comfort and security of his mother's lap or a more available surrogate (not dissimilar from the reactions of Harlow's (1960) rhesus monkeys).

The prediction was that parents of dependent children would be rated higher on the Type I parent variable (treating the child as an adult) than would the parents of competent children.

Type II Parents. The Type II parent was characterized as the parent who treats the child as an infant. This hypothesis was not dissimilar from those advanced in connection with Levy's (1943) concept of the dominantly (rather than indulgently) overprotective parent who restricts the child's natural inclination toward independent action, growth and exploration of his world. The hypothesis can be stated simply that overprotection or infantilization of the child should be positively related to the

dependence of the child. The overprotection can be limited to physical exploration but is more often found to pervade the domains of intellectual and social areas of exploration and discovery. This hypothesis is not unrelated to the "reinforcement" and "modeling" hypotheses popular currently (Bandura and Walters, 1959). However, the dynamics of the parent-child interaction within this type of home or from this type of parent (who treats the child as an infant) were believed to be more subtle and pernicious than a simple reinforcement or modeling theory might lead one to expect.

The prediction was that parents of dependent children would be rated higher in treating the child as an infant (as Type II parents) than would parents of competent children.

Type III Parents. The third type of parent was described as the parent who treats the child as he is. This parent is in many respects an ideal type. He has very few personal problems which might affect his treatment of the child. This parental type was described as warm, loving, accepting, interested, responsible, self-actualizing, but more importantly, as uniquely in tune with the needs and abilities of the child.

It was predicted that parents of competent children would be rated higher on this variable than would parents of dependent children.

Consistency Hypothesis. This involved the assessment of the discrepancy between the philosophy of child-rearing adopted by the parent and his inclination (or disposition) to react in a certain way to dependent behavior observed in his child. For example, it might be expected that a parent raised by rather authoritarian parents or in a highly restrictive environment might be expected to respond restrictively to his or her child. At the same time, one or both of the parents may have adopted a so-called "permissive" philosophy of child training. The propensity to respond restrictively to the child (e.g., spanking and chiding) for the violation of certain family rules, it was argued, might come into conflict with the desire to follow a more permissive philosophy. Although many parents seemed to repress or suppress natural tendencies to respond in a restrictive, authoritarian, punishing fashion (because they had adopted a "permissive" philosophy), they might be expected to resort to these "natural tendencies" to restrict or use physical force in shaping the behavior of the child, when under stress. The believed violation of his permissive philosophy might cause the parent some concern (even guilt) for having "given in" to his impulse to be restrictive. It might further be expected that this parent's inconsistency might contribute to uncertainty or confusion in the child concerning what is allowable, suitable, or reasonable for him (the child) to do under the circumstances.

In the extreme, one might expect the child to develop confused or imprecise concepts regarding the appropriateness of fighting for one's rights, arguing and asking for help. Such a confused child often does not know how to react to either his peers or to adults (incompetence). This uncertainty may lead to the adaptive device of over-reliance on others to tell him what to do (dependence).

The hypothesis, in summary, states that, within a wide range of parental practices, to the extent the parents' philosophy is coincident with his tendencies to respond to the child, the child would be expected to be maximally competent and appropriately independent. Conversely, to the extent that the parents' philosophy of child-rearing and natural tendencies to respond are maximally discrepant, the child would be expected to be dependent, at least upon his parents, if not across persons and situations. It was predicted that the discrepancy for the parents of dependent children would be greater than for the parents of competent children.

II

METHOD

The design for this study was in large part dictated by the conceptualization of the variables investigated and their hypothesized relationships. Thirty-two children (17 dependent and 15 competent) and their parents were chosen for study from a group of 165 children observed in eleven preschool nurseries.

In brief, the methods and procedures chosen for the assessment of the parent and child variables were as follows:

1. The children were studied in local preschool nurseries by global rating scales (see Appendix A).
2. On the basis of global-global judgment made by the observers (independently of the global rating scales) for the child's dependence and competence in the nursery (see Appendix A), the child and his family (as a group) were invited to visit the University and participate in the study for two successive sessions of approximately one hour each on the same evening.
3. In Session I the parents completed a number of paper and pencil questionnaires (see below and Appendixes B and C for these forms). During this session, the parents were requested to keep the child with them until he could have his opportunity to go to play with "the toys," During this interval, the mother, father, and child were observed from behind a one-way mirror.
4. During the second session (Session II), the parents were conducted to separate offices and interviewed by trained interviewers, while the child was interviewed in a third room by the experimenter.
5. Finally, the experimenter discussed with the parents their having been observed from behind a one-way mirror, the problems of scientific validity, the purpose of the study, and its hypotheses. The family was then dismissed.
6. At a later time the tapes of the interviews with the parents were analyzed and global ratings of the parental variables were recorded.
7. Several months later the parents received a description of the study, its hypotheses, and findings. At the same time, they were invited to a large meeting of the participating parents to discuss the study with the investigator (and other interested parents).

The Children Studied

Thirteen of the largest nurseries in the community were chosen for study. All accepted with only two temporarily delaying.

Because of various problems encountered in retaining the 165 children in the sample to the completion of the study, 125 girls, in all, were observed for the specified one hour. The 40 girls deleted from the original sample included children who either dropped out of the preschool or whose attendance was so infrequent or intermittent that their behavior could not be appropriately sampled.

Observation and Assessment of the Dependence and Competence of the Child

Observation and Assessment of the Child in the Nursery. Where possible, a particular child's behavior was studied at random intervals over a period of from four to seven months. Each child was observed for a total period of sixty minutes or more. The observation procedure involved "time sampling," where each interval lasted approximately five minutes after which a global rating of the child's dependence and competence was made (see Appendix A).

Interjudge Reliability Coefficients for Global Ratings in the Nursery. Each of the nursery school child observers was trained for approximately one and one-half hours in the nursery. Pearsonian product moment correlation coefficients were calculated for each of the observers with one or more of the other observers and this investigator (see Table 1). The mean reliability coefficient for the global competence of the child was .667, with the range being between .662 and .674 (see Table 1). The mean for global dependence was .645 and the range from .589 to .692 (see Table 1).

Global-global Ratings for the Child in the Nursery. After a child had been observed for sixty minutes, each observer who had observed her for any period of time made eight additional global judgments for her competence and dependence and indicated his confidence in his rating on a scale of from 1 to 4 (see Appendix A). These global judgments included the ratings of the child's dependence on, and competence with, adults, peers, and objects (six ratings) and a global judgment for her overall competence and dependence.

Selecting the Children for Further Study in the Laboratory. From the group of 125 girls who were observed for the full one hour in the preschool nursery, 34 (18 competent and 16 dependent) were selected for further study in interaction with their parents in the laboratory. The choice of these extreme groups of children provided the basis for the selection of the parents who participated in the study.

The methodological justification for the use of an excluded middle design rather than dichotomizing the entire sample of preschool children into high and low dependence and competence follows from the conceptualization of traits (Clapp, 1966). In the selection of the competent and dependent children the

Table 1

Interjudge Reliability Correlation Coefficients Among This Investigator and Two Observers for the Competence and Dependence of the Child in the School

	This investigator and Observer Number 1	This investigator and Observer Number 2	Observer Number 1 and Observer Number 2	Averages
Global Competence	.666	.662	.674	.667
Competence with Peers	.296	.400	.621	.439
Competence with Objects	.568	.865	.904	.779
Global Dependence	.589	.692	.655	.645
Dependence on Peers	.398	.333	.695	.475
Dependence on Objects	.304	.657	.280	.413

N = 24 for each comparison

investigator chose the children to be studied based on the child observer's and his global-global (or overall global) judgments of the child's competence or dependence without regard to the observer's individual global ratings for the child. That is, the selection of the children for further study was not based on a summation or average of their global ratings recorded in the preschool nursery, but were based rather on the final overall impression of the observer and this investigator as to the "competence" or "dependence" of the child.

Assessment of the Parental Variables

The parental variables for the purpose of this study were the dependent or predicted variables. They included assessments of the parents for their tendency to treat the child as an adult, an infant, or as a child (see Hypotheses, Section I) and parental consistency measured in several ways. The major test of the hypotheses was the tape analysts' global ratings of the parental treatment variables based on the parental interviews.

During Session I in the laboratory, the parents filled out two questionnaires employed partly as a rationale for their retention in the lab with their child so that they could be observed (see Appendixes B and C). Also, during Session I (while the parents were completing their forms and interacting with the child) the mother and father interviewers (for Session II) were observing the interaction among the family members from behind a one-way mirror.

The rationale for allowing the interviewers to observe the parent-child interaction was to facilitate their probing the parents in the interview and thereby to enhance the validity of the ratings. The reliability coefficients for the assessment of parental variables during the observation period (Session I) are presented in Table 2. These coefficients were derived by correlating the ratings of the mother observer with those of the father observer, each of whom rated both the mother and the father during Session I. The reliabilities of these ratings were quite low (average reliability coefficient for fathers was .232 and for mothers .173). This represents no marked departure from the reliability coefficients obtained in the earlier parallel study (Clapp, 1966, where the coefficients averaged .153 for fathers and .280 for mothers). These coefficients were believed to be depressed in the previous study due to the fact that the mother and father observers actually engaged in different observational functions, viz., the mother observer's task was to focus primarily upon the mother's behavior and the father observer on the father's. In addition, in this study, it was concluded that the observation of the parent-child interaction in the laboratory was virtually useless, if not misleading, due to the fact that most of the parents were overly conscious of being observed from behind the

Table 2

Interjudge Reliability Correlation Coefficients Between the Father Observer and the Mother Observer for Global Parental Ratings (Session 1)

Parental Variables	For Fathers: Between Father Observer and Mother Observer[1]	For Mothers: Between Father Observer and Mother Observer[2]
Type I	.465	-.111
Type II	.624	.572
Type III	.003	.289
Consistency	.009	.057

[1] N = 24

[2] N = 30

mirror, and, as a consequence, were discerned to be giving the observers misleading cues concerning their typical interaction with their family.

Since there was only one interview for each parent, no reliability coefficients were derived for this rating made during Session II, although the judgments based upon the tapes (see below) represent an equivalent of these interviewer ratings of the parents (see reliability coefficients based on the interviewers' tapes in Table 4).

Interviews with the Parents. During the second hour (Session II) the parents were given an unstructured interview in separate rooms by one of six trained interviewers. The interview focused upon how the parent treated the child (see Appendix D for interview format).

The purpose of the interview was to obtain information sufficient for assessment of the parents on global rating scales for the parental variables from the taped interviews (see Appendix D).

Global Ratings of the Parental Variables from the Tapes of the Interviews. The decision to base the test of the hypotheses for this study upon independent ratings of the taped interviews rather than upon ratings made by the interviewers themselves was made in the interest of obtaining certain methodological purification of this study. Ratings by the interviewers of the parents could have been criticized as reflecting the interviewers' efforts to fit the parents' ratings with the observed behavior of the child. An important aspect of the tape analysts' data was the fact that these judges did not observe the child in the lab and therefore could not be accused of fitting "good parents" with "good children" (or vice versa) based on their observation of the child in the lab. However, since the parental interview included unavoided and, probably, unavoidable statements about the child's competence and/or dependence, one could argue that the judges rating the tapes could be receiving enough information about the child to conclude which category (competent or dependent) the child had been assigned to, and fit "bad" or "good" (adult or child treatment) parents with "bad" or "good" (dependent or competent) children respectively (a type of halo or social desirability hypothesis).

In an earlier study (Clapp, 1966), in an effort to test this methodological point, sixteen tapes and transcripts for the interviews for three parents of each of the categories (mothers and fathers or competent and dependent children) were selected at random. All the information about the child was transcribed and presented to several of the tape analysts or judges. They were simply informed, "You are to do the best you can at rating

these parents for the parental variables on the basis of the briefer information on these transcripts." The judges then rated the sixteen abbreviated transcripts of the parental interviews (containing only the information about the child's reported behavior) to ascertain whether they could distinguish the parents of competent children from the parents of dependent children. A significant "t" test comparison would have indicated that the judges could detect the parents of competent and dependent children based solely upon the information about the child's reported behavior obtained from the parental interview. The "t" test comparison of these ratings are presented in Table 3. Only two of the eight comparisons of fathers and mothers of dependent and competent children even approached significance.

From these findings it seems apparent that the taped interview raters were unable to distinguish the parents on the basis of the information about the child derived from the tapes. The interview tape judges do not appear to have been testing any obscure sorts of hypotheses and the data for the parents obtained from the ratings of the tapes can be considered a relatively pure assessment of the dependent or parental variables.

The interjudge reliabilities for the ratings of the tapes by two judges (by phi coefficients) averaged .472 for the mothers and .400 for the fathers (see Table 4). Of course, it must be noted again that these correlations were based on rather small sample size (n = 18 and 16, respectively; see Table 4), making reliability coefficients themselves rather unstable.

Interjudge Reliabilities for the Ratings for the Child's Dependence and Competence in the Laboratory with her Parents. Table 5 contains the interjudge reliability coefficients for the ratings of the child made by this investigator and the mother and father observers. These coefficients were derived in an effort to ascertain the correspondence between the ratings made by an individual who had observed the child in the nursery or knew the classification of the child (this investigator) and the mother and father observers. These correlations also indicate the extent of the child's tendency to behave in the laboratory similarly to the way she behaved in the nursery. As Table 5 indicates, the correspondence was rather high, averaging .411 for competence and .484 for dependence.

Ways in Which This Study Differed from the Previous Study on Four-Year-Old Boys. Although the original plan for the research was that the previous study with boys (Clapp, 1966) be replicated in every detail possible, this was not found to be feasible or desirable. The major methodological departure from the early study concerned the laboratory observation.

Due to recent U. S. Senatorial investigations of the ethical practices of researchers in the social sciences (American Psychologist,

Table 3

Two Analysts' Global Judgments for the Parental Variables Based on Tape Transcripts of the Information About the Child's Behavior

Parental Variables	Groups Compared: Mothers of Competent vs. Dependent Children	Groups Compared: Fathers of Competent vs. Dependent Children
Type I	.670[a]	1.000[b]
Type II	-.645	-.277
Type III	-.161	-2.449*
Consistency	.508	-3.000*

*p <.05 by "t" test

[a]N = 12

[b]N = 12

Table 4

Inter-judge Reliability Correlation Coefficients Between Two Analysts for the Parental Global Variables for These Parents Judged by Both Analysts

Parental Variables	Mothers[1]	Fathers[2]	Parents[3]
Type I	.503	.655	.556
Type II	.621	.408	.589
Type III	.514	.343	.422
Consistency	.249	.192	.263
Average	.472	.400	.460

[1] N = 18

[2] N = 16

[3] N = 34

Table 5

Interjudge Reliability Correlation Coefficients Between Mother Observer and Father Observer and This Investigator for Child Global Ratings in the Laboratory (Session 1)

	This investigator and Mother Observer[1]	This investigator and Father Observer[2]	Mother Observer and Father Observer[3]
Global Competence	.670	.163	.417
Competence with Adults	.466	.295	.381
Competence with Objects	.554	.314	.434
Average			.411
Global Dependence	.622	.381	.502
Dependence on Adults	.577	.369	.473
Dependence on Objects	.524	.428	.476
Average			.484

[1] N = 34

[2] N = 34

[3] N = 68

1966) and the resultant stress placed upon researcher sensitivity to the violation of individual privacy by the American Psychological Association, it was deemed undesirable to disguise the two-way mirror during the observation of the mother-father-child interaction during the first phase of the study. In this study the mirror was in plain view and was noticed by most parents. The parents were told (whether or not they noticed the mirror) that there was a two-way mirror but that "it was to be used essentially in the observation of the child." Thus all parents were aware of the mirror window. It is this investigator's considered opinion (although it represents an unvalidated impression) that the parents were considerably more guarded in their interactions with each other and their child in this study than in the previous study (Clapp, 1966).

As a result, the observers of the parent-child interactions had much less valid information about the parents on which to base both their observational judgments and their interviews (as was noted above in conjunction with the low reliability of laboratory observers' ratings of the parents).

This is to say, the parents could have been playing a socially desirable role in this study, which possibility was specifically discounted in the previous study (see Clapp, 1966). If the parents had been "role playing" during the observation session and if the validity of the observation session was crucial to obtaining the information in the interview (as it was for the ratings of the tapes, as was argued in the previous study; Clapp, 1966, q.v.), then it would not be surprising if the results from this study were not as significant as in the previous study.

Another difference in this study from the previous one (Clapp, 1966) was the fact that it was more difficult to obtain 40 children representative of the extreme of competence and dependence. The reasons for this phenomenon are not readily apparent. Prior to the analysis of the data, it was speculated that the explanation might be found in the fact that dependence in girls is a much more acceptable trait behavior than it is for boys. As such we would expect the average girl to be more dependent, and, as a consequence, competent girls would also be more dependent than competent boys. If very competent girls are generally more dependent, it is understandable that finding girls who are not at all dependent would present more difficulties than would be the case (in the earlier study, Clapp, 1966) in finding such boys. As will be noted in the discussion section of this report, other alternative explanations become apparent from the analysis of other data.

III

RESULTS

The specific hypotheses tested were of two varieties:

1. Those pertaining to the type of parental treatment of the child (Type I - as an adult, Type II - as an infant, and Type III - as a child).
2. Those pertaining to a measure of parental consistency.

Types of Parents

The hypotheses for the three types of parents stated that parents of dependent children would be rated as being more inclined to treat the child as an adult (Type I) or as an infant (Type II) than would parents of competent children. It was predicted that the parents of a competent child would be found to treat their daughter more as a child (Type III) than would the parents of a dependent child. These predictions were made for the comparisons between both the fathers and mothers. As was noted, the tests of the hypotheses were based on the ratings made by the judges rating the tapes derived from the interviews.

Type I Parent (Treating the Child as an Adult). As hypothesized, it was found that the fathers of dependent children were judged by the raters of the interview tapes to treat their children more as adults than were the fathers of competent children ($p < .025$, see Table 6). However, the mothers were not found to be rated significantly different on this variable.

Type II Parent (Treating the Child as an Infant). Again, as hypothesized, the fathers of the dependent girls were judged to treat their daughters more as infants than were the fathers of competent girls ($p < .025$, see Table 6). Again the mothers were not distinguished on this parental treatment variable.

Type III Parent (Treating the Child as a Child). It was found that while mothers of competent girls treated their daughters significantly more as children than did the mothers of dependent girls ($p < .05$, see Table 6), there was no significant difference between the two sets of fathers for this parental variable.

Parental Consistency

Two methods were developed for the assessment of parental consistency. These included:

Table 6

Comparisons[1] Between Parents of Competent and Dependent Girls from Ratings Based on Tape Transcriptions of the Parental Interviews

Parental Variables	Mothers[2]	Fathers[3]
Type I	.059	2.012**
Type II	1.352	2.015**
Type III	-1.901*	-.708
Consistency	1.097	1.401

[1] by "t" test

[2] N = 45

[3] N = 37

*p < .05

**p < .025

1. A discrepancy measure representing the difference between the parents' philosophy (or beliefs) of child-rearing and their perceived nature (or behavior) or tendency to treat the child in a particular way.

2. The consistency of parental treatment of the child as assessed by direct global ratings made from the interview tapes.

Discrepancy Between the Parent's Philosophy and Nature. According to the hypothesis, it was predicted that the parents of dependent children would be judged to reveal greater calculated discrepancies between their philosophies of child-rearing and their tendencies to behave in a particular way toward the child (nature) inconsistent with that philosophy than would the parents of competent children.

An analysis of the discrepancy between the parents' natural way of treating their daughter (nature) and their belief in how they should treat her (philosophy of child-rearing) revealed no significant differences for either the mothers or fathers compared (see Table 7).

Consistency Assessed by Global Rating from the Interview Tapes. This method for assessment of parental consistency involved direct global ratings for the perceived difference between the parents' philosophy and nature rather than a numerical discrepancy calculation. No significant differences were obtained for this assessment of consistency for either the mothers or the fathers compared (see Table 6).

Table 7

Comparisons[1] Between Parents of Competent and Dependent Girls Based on the Discrepancy Between the Parents' Philosophy and Nature of Treating the Child

Parental Variables	Mothers[2]	Fathers[3]
Type I	.538	1.067
Type II	.226	1.168
Type III	1.488	.227
Consistency	.388	1.014

[1] by "t" test

[2] N = 45

[3] N = 37

IV

DISCUSSION

The results of this study for four-year-old girls represent a slight departure from the extremely significant findings for the earlier study of four-year-old boys conducted under essentially the same conditions by the same methods and procedures (Clapp, 1966). While the earlier study (Clapp, 1966) supported the hypothesized relationships extremely well, this study revealed fewer significant relationships between the child's relative competence and dependence and the parent's treatment of the child.

Fortunately, in this study the hypothesis of methodological error, as an explanation for the decrease in the significance and number of relationships found in this study compared to its companion study with boys (Clapp, 1966), can in part be discounted to the extent that the procedures differed (see Methods, Section II). The reason methods would not appear to be the reason for the reduced degree of the significance of some of the findings is that the interjudge reliability coefficients for the various assessments of both parent and child variables are almost uniformly higher in this study than in the previous study with boys (Clapp, 1966).

If the lack of significance for this study compared to the companion study with boys (Clapp, 1966) cannot be attributed to method error, how, then, can these findings be explained? It has long been apparent that one of the major findings in the field of personality and developmental psychological research is that the behavior of boys and girls differ. This difference in behavior, although having its basis in the biological differences of the species, can be accounted for in large part by sex typing and the differential expectations placed upon the behavior of little boys by comparison to little girls by our culture and society. This is especially true of the traits of competence and dependence. Girls are not expected to be as competent as boys, especially in the quantitative skills. As a consequence, very little effort or concern is attached to a girl who develops too strong an identification with, or dependence upon, her mother in the early grade-school years. It is well known that girls do not in general develop the quantitative proficiency that boys do (see norms for College Board or Graduate Record Exam scores for boys vs. girls for any given year). This difference in ability has not as yet been attributed to any genetic differences in the sexes, leaving the

hypothesis of differential cultural reinforcement of the sexes in our society the best contender for an explanation of these differences.

Conversely, dependence in girls is culturally valued, but is considered undesirable in boys. This is true without regard to the appropriateness of the dependence (or competence) to the child's later development of his (or her) potential as a person.

In this study it was noted that it was more difficult to find clear cut extreme cases of competence or dependence in four-year-old girls than it was to find extreme cases in boys in the earlier study. This is to say, the girls who were most competent often manifested a great deal of dependence. As a consequence (as was noted in the Methods section of this report, q.v.), it was necessary to force more girls into the extreme in the effort to arrive at a sample of dependent and competent girls sufficiently large to employ the statistical tests necessary to compare the children. Put in the vernacular, we were forced to "scrape the bottom of the barrel" at an earlier point in selecting our sample of girls than was the case in the previous study of boys (Clapp, 1966).

As will be recalled from the presentation of the methods and procedures for the testing of the hypothesis set forth in this study, the crucial test of the relationships among these parents and children was to be derived from judgments of the parental variables based upon the tapes obtained during the interviews with the parents. This method was found in an earlier study (Clapp, 1966) to be essentially free of contamination and confounding. Specifically, it was found in that study (Clapp, 1966) that the ratings made for the parents were essentially unrelated to the information that could be obtained about the child's personality obtained from the tapes.

Types of Parents

Three types of parents were believed to be related to the relative dependence and competence of the child. These were referred to as treating the child as an "adult," as an "infant" (or baby), and as a "child." Treating the children as adults and infants was assessed and conceptualized as appropriate, if not excessive. Treating the child as a child was conceptualized as doing enough of the right sorts of things (see Ossorio, 1966) for the child. At the risk of oversimplification, this can be thought of as treating the child as the child she is, having certain abilities and infirmities when compared to other children of her age, being a four-year-old and having all those needs, fears, and interests associated with children of her age.

As was reported in the results (Section III), fathers of the dependent girls treated their daughters both more as adults and more as infants ($p < .025$ for both) than did fathers of competent girls (see Tables 6 and 7). This was not true for the mothers of dependent girls when compared to the mothers of competent girls, although the trend for the data was in the right direction (p .10 for the infant treatment). These data represent a type of switch in the importance of the mother and father from the previous study with boys (Clapp, 1966). In that study it was the mothers of the dependent boys who were most different from the mothers of competent boys for the adult treatment, although neither set of parents was significantly different in the tendency to infantilize (treat as an infant) the child. These findings would tend to indicate that the relationship of the mother to her son was more important to the development of competence, while the relationship of the father to daughter was more crucial. This might be the prediction made according to psychoanalytic theory, specifically relating to the importance of the successful resolution of the "so-called" Oedipal complex.

Concerning the third type of parent (Type III), the "treating of the child as a child," it was found that mothers of competent girls treated their daughters more as children than did the mothers of dependent girls, as predicted ($p < .05$; see Table 8). There was no difference between the two sets of fathers on this variable. This finding represents a replication of the previous study with boys (Clapp, 1966).

This finding presents an intriguing outcome for this study. We have the pattern now of fathers differing significantly in their tendencies to treat their daughters as either adults or infants, with the mothers not distinguished on these variables, while the mothers differ significantly only in their tendency to treat their daughters as children, while the fathers did not differ on this variable. In each of these three cases where significant results were obtained, the findings were in the hypothesized direction, i.e. that parents of competent children would treat their daughters less as adults or infants and more as children than would parents of dependent children. However, it was not predicted that mothers would be distinguished only on child treatment and fathers only on adult and infant treatment. Nevertheless, the findings do appear to have a clear post hoc rationale. It could be that it is only the father's behavior toward his daughter that is crucial in her development of dependence and only the mother's behavior that is critical in her competence development. Fathers may simply not have the time, energy or interest in developing competence in their daughters, but they may be able to contribute to their daughters' dependence by treating them as adults (pushing them too hard) or as infants (indulging or babying them excessively).

Whatever the case may be, it will entail further research in greater depth and perhaps on an idiographic basis to ascertain more precisely what is happening in this complex interaction of variables. Nevertheless, it is apparent from this and the previous companion study with boys (Clapp, 1966) that "treatment" variables as conceptualized in these studies should prove to be of increasing value to the researcher in the future.

Parental Consistency

As noted in the results, neither measure for the assessment of parental consistency was significant for either the mothers or the fathers compared. The findings again represent a departure from the earlier companion study of boys (Clapp, 1966) where it was found that parents of competent children were less discrepant in their philosophy of child-rearing as compared with their behavior (or natural tendency to treat the child in a particular way, as an adult or as an infant or as a child consistently - see Table 7).

There is no obvious reason why parental consistency might be important to the development of competence in boys and not in girls as was found in this study. It could be that parents of dependent and competent children are equally consistent or inconsistent with girls while they are only differentially consistent (as between parents of competent and dependent boys) with boys. It was not possible to assess this notion in the present study although the hypothesis will be tested in a follow-up analysis.

V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The conclusions are apparent from the discussion of the results. The importance of the father treatment of a daughter accounts for at least part of the development of her relative competence and dependence. Fathers of dependent four-year-old girls treat them either as adults or as infants to a significantly greater extent than do fathers of competent girls. Mothers of dependent girls treat their daughters significantly more as children, i.e. as the children they are with their inherent (or acquired) limitations and abilities, while neither group of fathers distinguish themselves as being especially adept at treating their daughters as children.

Thus, it is not so much what the fathers do that differentiates their daughters' competence, but rather what they do not do, viz. treat them too much as infants or expect too much from them (treat them as adults). With mothers, however, it does appear that what they do is important and is related to their daughters' competence, viz., that they treat their daughters as children.

In terms of the parents of competent girls, then, we have the picture of a father and a mother, neither of whom are excessively inclined to push or hold back their child. In addition, the mother, at least, is fairly in tune with her daughter, which is also a necessary part of not being too pushy or babying the child.

The picture of the dependent four-year-old girl is, on the other hand, quite different. Here the father tends to be more directly involved in pushing or holding back his daughter, as is the mother, while neither parent is particularly adept at knowing where the child is as a person or in meeting her dependency or competency needs.

Parental consistency, another type of treatment variable, was found to be unrelated to the child's dependence or competence in either of the two ways it was assessed.

The implications for these findings also seem quite straightforward. Parents, in order to be most effective at producing the atmosphere in which their daughter can develop her growing competence and overcome her childhood dependency, must be in tune with her as a person, including being sensitive to her knowledge, abilities, and motivation in all areas (peer relations, adult relations and object relations). If they (or at least the mother)

are not in tune with their child, they would at least be well advised not to push too hard or baby her too much if they hope to avoid perpetuating her dependency and inhibiting her competence development.

It may be that the father does not need to worry too much about working too hard at developing his daughter's competence provided that he does not contribute to her dependence by pushing her too hard (adult treatment) or by babying her excessively (infant treatment).

Thus, we can conclude that both parents are important to the development of the child. The mother's active role in treating her daughter as a child is clear, while the father's importance in the development of his daughter's competence (at least on the basis of this study) would appear to hinge on his not treating her either as an adult or as an infant. The same is not true of his relationship with his son in developing his competence. In the case of boys, it was noted in the earlier study with boys (Clapp, 1966) that the father must take an active role in treating his son as a child, although the mother's active role in treating her son as a child also seems quite important to the development of a four-year-old boy's competence.

What precisely is involved in the parent treatment of the child as a child has been left rather vague. No pat formulas have been set forth for the production of a competent child. Indeed, it may be that there can be no precise specification of the specific things a parent must do to facilitate competence development. Rather, an outline of the type of quality relationship that appears significant in terms of the mother-father-child interaction has been laid out in only the roughest of forms.

Nevertheless, it seems that a parent, in order to create the environment in which competence can develop, must be sensitive to the current needs of the child and make possible those things, at that time, for that unique child. To grasp for a pat formula, e.g. be more permissive or more restrictive, may be precisely where parents fall short in creating the atmosphere for competence development to be possible and rather unwittingly perpetuate the child's dependence and incompetence. Indeed, it is possible that parents would be well advised to lay off (give up their pushy adult and/or babying treatment) their daughter and let her grow. Maybe (just maybe) our children would grow up more well adjusted, competent and happy if we paid less attention to the permissive and restrictive proponents and learned more about how to treat our children as the children they are rather than searching for child-rearing formulas.

In terms of being more sensitive to the needs (interests, abilities, interests, fears, etc.) of the child, a parent might

well be advised to study "Childrenese" (to borrow from Dr. Hain Ginott) and get to know his or her child a little better before going off half-cocked with some new program for "shaping up" the child's behavior. Maybe (just maybe) in the process of learning from our children we will have done a great deal for them, as well as for ourselves.

A further implication can be drawn from this study for the direction of future research in child development, especially for those researches endeavoring to relate parent and child variables (dependence and competence, in particular). Much of what was demonstrated in this study was more a vindication of the detailed analysis of the parent and child variables studied than a validation of the hypotheses tested. Most of the findings were not entirely novel, although they tended to clarify several confusions and contradictions in the research literature. Thus a major implication from this study might be that we as researchers could afford to devote more of our efforts to the analysis and conceptualization of our variables before we go out muddying up the water of what we all know to be the case about children and parents. To continue to establish obvious or trivial truths about people would not seem to be worthy of our efforts.

Another related implication for researchers is that we may be well advised to stay close to ordinary language in the use of concepts rather than developing our novel little twists in our reconstruction of terms and implementation of novel technical jargon. This is especially true if we wish to use human judges to assess personality variables under real life circumstances rather than paper and pencil instruments of questionable validity.

VI

SUMMARY

This study was an effort to replicate a similar study (Clapp, 1966) of four-year-old boys. In this study, four-year-old girls and their parents were studied to ascertain the relationship between parental treatment and its effect upon the perpetuation of childhood dependence and the development of competence.

Three basic types of parental treatment were conceptualized and labeled as treating the child as an adult, as an infant (babying or overprotection) and as the child she is. Also, parental consistency was assessed in several different ways.

The four-year-old girls were selected on the basis of their representing extreme groups of competent and dependent children from a group of 165 girls, each of whom was observed in one of eleven nurseries and preschools for at least one hour on at least twelve different occasions over a six to nine month interval.

The parents of these children were selected for further observation study in a laboratory interaction with their child and were later interviewed and assessed for their tendency to treat the child in various ways on the basis of the interview tapes.

It was found that fathers of dependent girls treated their daughters either as adults or as infants (or both) while their mothers tended not to treat them as children significantly more than the comparison families. The parental consistency variable was not significant for either of the methods employed for its assessment as a parental treatment variable.

It was concluded that the three major types of parental treatment variables were significant in the development of competence and the perpetuation of childhood dependence when the family was viewed as a constellation of interacting persons in a particular contextual setting. Conclusions and recommendations for concerned parents were drawn with the hope that future research would pursue the model and methods for research employed in this study.

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APPENDIX A

Global Ratings of the Child

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle one number beside each scale where 1 indicates the absence of the trait and 7 the presence.

Competence with peers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐ *
Competence with adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
Competence with objects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
Dependence on objects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
Dependence on adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
Dependence on peers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
Overall judgment as to the child's competence and/or dependence								
C = Competence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐
D = Dependence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	☐

Child's Name _____

* Confidence rating, 1 = low and 4 = high.

APPENDIX B

A NOTE TO THE PARENT

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in the information gathering project. This is a standard form completed by all parents participating in this project. It is designed to gather some standard background information. Some of the questions are of a highly personal nature and as such will be retained in a confidential file. In addition, you will note that you are not asked to give your name but only your role as "a mother" or "a father." By not indicating your name, address, etc., your responses to this request for standard background information remain anonymous and your identity unknown to anyone. If you have any questions about why any of these questions have been asked, please let us know, otherwise please complete the form at this time.

University of Colorado
Institute of Behavioral Science
Boulder, Colorado

(Check one) I am a mother_____ I am a father_____

1. Today's date_____ 2. Your age_____

3. Your religious preference_____ 4. Your place of birth_____

5. Circle the highest grade you completed in regular day school or college:
Grade School: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 High school: 1 2 3 4
College: 1 2 3 4 Graduate or Professional: 1 2 3

If, in addition, you have attended any other schools, write in the number of years attended:

A. Business College_____ C. Nurses Training_____
B. Trade School_____ D. Other (specify)_____

6. What kind of work do you usually do (for example, salesman in a store, traveling salesman, factory worker, school teacher, foreman, store keeper, office worker, barber, dentist, tool and die maker, etc.)?

Please try to describe in a few words exactly what you do on your job (for example, if you are a salesman, what do you sell. If you are a foreman or supervisor, what do the people do who you supervise)?

7. Which one of these things is true about where you work?

_____ I work for a small company or store
_____ I work for a big company or factory
_____ I work for myself (for example, own my own business)
_____ I work for the government
_____ I am a student

8. Family background: Your Father Your Mother

a. place of birth.....

b. amount of education..

c. major occupation....

d. religion.....

9. Ages of your children. Please do not write in their names, just their ages.

	Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls
1.			3.		
2.			4.		

Now circle the child with you today.

10. Marital history

(a) When married last

(b) How many previous marriages? Give dates and children by previous marriages.

(c) What are the visitation practices for both parents? Describe.

(d) Describe play behavior and interaction between children of prior and present marriage.

11. What is your approximate annual income?

(a) your income	_____
(b) spouse's (husband's or wife's) income	_____
(c) income from securities or other outside sources (e.g., gifts, parents, etc.)	_____
Total income	_____

12. Approximately how much time do you spend each week with your child, which is devoted entirely to your child to help him with things or just having fun with him?

(a) Time helping him _____ minutes.
(b) Time having fun with him _____ minutes.

13. How often have you moved to a different neighborhood in the past four years? _____ times.

How seriously do you feel this has affected your son?
Check one:

Very greatly	_____
Quite a bit	_____
Somewhat	_____
Very little	_____
Not at all	_____
Don't know	_____

14. Indicate the number of children and the sex of these children with whom your son has played in each of the neighborhoods he has lived in, in the past four or five years (e.g., 2 boys and one girl in 1st, 1 boy and 5 girls in the 2nd, etc.).

15. Indicate the previous nursery, pre-schools, music or ballet schools, etc., your son has attended and the approximate duration and his age for each.

1. nursery school	___	Age___	Days___	Duration of___
2. music school	___	___	per ___	attendance ___
3. Sunday School	___	___	week___	___
4. Other _____		___	___	___

16. Is there a child living at home who is more than 8 years older than the child with you today?

17. Are there grandparents living in your home?

Grandmother(s)	____
Grandfather(s)	____
Both	____

APPENDIX C

Parental Developmental Timetable

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out what you think is the most appropriate age at which average boys and girls may be expected to begin to manage different situations. People have different opinions in such matters and there are no "correct" ages. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. Give us your own opinions without asking other people what they think. Your ideas are just as important and just as "correct" as anyone else's. The best answer you can give us is what you believe.

Base your answer only on what you believe the appropriate age should be for most children. This may or may not be the same as the age at which something actually did occur to a child you know or on what you have seen some parents do. Remember, we are interested only in what you believe the age should be.

Write in the age which you think is appropriate for the average child. This questionnaire will be given to people with children and people without children. All are asked what they think is appropriate generally for most children.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT EACH AND EVERY QUESTION BE ANSWERED.

I BELIEVE PARENTS SHOULD	Most Appropriate Age for Boys	Most Appropriate Age for Girls
1. Begin to train their child to wash himself with no adult assistance		
2. Begin to teach their child not to fight but to first try to reason with other children		
3. Begin to correct their child who messes with his food		
4. Begin to teach their child that crying is not the way to get what he wants		
5. Begin to teach their child to feel that it is wrong to lie		
6. Begin to teach their child not to use their fingers when eating		
7. Begin to teach their child that it is wrong to break a promise		
8. Begin to make their child aware of the cost of objects the child damages		
9. Begin to teach their child that taking something from others--without their permission--is wrong		
10. Begin to train their child to keep his room tidy		
11. Begin to teach their child to share his toys ..		
12. Begin to discourage their child from crying over minor disappointments		
13. Begin to teach their child not to cry every time the child gets hurt		
14. Begin to teach their child not to enter a toilet when it is being used by a child of the opposite sex		
15. Begin to let their child settle by himself the fights he has with children of the same age and size		
16. Begin to teach their child that it is wrong to cheat		
17. Begin to train their child to hang up clothes right after they are taken off		
18. Begin to encourage their child to dress himself without help		

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS AND INTERVIEW FORMAT

Interview with Parent

I. Instructions to the interviewer:

A. Here are some general suggestions regarding how to probe certain responses which we have difficulty coding which can be clarified.

1. If unclear whether the technique being described by the parent was physical or verbal (e.g., "I would get him to rebuild the other child's house" "I would try to get him to share" "make him stop"), use the following probe questions: "Can you tell me how you usually do that?" If the parent says the type of situation asked about never happens, or that she doesn't remember how she handles it, ask: "How do you think you might do it?" or "What would be your best guess as to how you would handle it?" Similarly for items dealing with the past ask: "Can you remember how you usually did that, how you usually would have done that?" or "How do you think you probably handled it?"

2. Items dealing with what the child is like or what the parent wants him to be like. Here we want to be sure of what the parent has in mind. So, as indicated in the interview schedule, such general responses as "attitudes," "actions," "personality," "disposition" should be probed. Also probe ambiguous terms like "looks," "good-natured," "slow," "honesty." For example, "In what ways is his personality (are his looks) like yours?" or "Can you give me an example of exactly what you mean by "good natured" ("slow"), ("honest"), etc.

3. Ambiguous terms like "well behaved" should also be probed for exactly what the parent means.

"I would like him to be like himself" should be probed, e.g., "Who else besides himself would you like him to be like?"

Probe for age child was (a) daytime trained, and (b) nighttime trained.

Responses indicating that the specific nature of the situation or what the child has done determines whether the wife or husband does the disciplining should be probed. First ask: "Who would you say generally tends to do the disciplining more often?" If the respondent still says "it all depends" then ask: "Can you tell me when you do it and when your husband does?"

II. Interview Format

The following outline of questions provides a fairly structured but rough guide to the type of information needed. Some of the answers to these questions may be obvious and unnecessary after the observation of the parent in the laboratory and need not be asked.

Each parent should be interviewed for at least forty minutes and not more than sixty minutes if possible. If the interview is completed in less than forty minutes or you feel you do not have enough information to validly complete the global judgments, you may proceed to ask the final group of questions entitled "Questions to be asked only if time permits."

The primary task for you as an interviewer is to get an idea of how the parent feels and behaves in the following areas of interest:

Was the parent basically

(1) warm and affectionate or cold and hostile,

(2) permissive or restrictive,

(3) behaving naturally or trying to follow a rigid philosophy of child-rearing and if so, what one (permissive, restrictive, etc.)

(4) treating child as (a) an adult, (b) an infant or baby, or (c) a child of age 4 with his unique abilities and/or infirmities,

(5) consistent or inconsistent in any area described above,

(6) a model of dependence or competence (or independence), and/or

(7) treating this child differently (a) from how he or she may have treated other children in the family and if so for what reasons, or (b) how he or she would have treated the child at home, in a doctor's office or in some other reasonably similar situation.

As the interviewer your major function is to utilize your clinical insight and sensitivity to ferret out and probe in as casual a manner as possible the parental traits indicated above. During the hour your sole responsibility is to gather as complete information as possible in as much detail and depth as possible.

At the completion of the interview you will make global ratings of the parent as a parent (not withstanding his or her behavior during this or the "observation" hour) on the variables listed above. Read and study carefully the descriptions of the traits and the method for assessment before completing the global rating form.

III. A Rough Outline for a General Introduction to the Parent by the Interviewer:

As was indicated when you were invited to participate in this study, the purposes are twofold: (1) to get an idea of the interest value of some particular toys which your child is now playing with and (2) to study the difference between what parents feel parents should do and what they actually do when with their children. The hope for this survey of parents is that we can all get some new ideas about how to bring up our children the way we want to. We can use all the ideas you can give us no matter how wild or peculiar they may seem to you.

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the items we will discuss. Everything you say in this interview will be held strictly confidential. Nothing you say during this discussion will be revealed to anyone outside this room. It is our hope that in this way we will discover some new ideas from you about what parents do.

IV. Serial Comparison Questions

Instructions for "Serial Comparison" Questions

In this part of the interview you are to focus upon the amount of strain the parent experiences in describing how difficult it is to do what they feel parents should do with children. Now natural does their described behavior with their child seem to be? How difficult is it for them to do what they think they should do when they try to do what they think they should? Also note the amount of strain or discomfort in talking about their ideas.

Try also to figure out how they are different in this interview or as a parent generally than they were in the lab interaction situation.

Blanks are to be filled in with the child's name.

Series Comparisons for Nature and Philosophy Discrepancy

1. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage:
   1. Loving_____when he cries for no reason.
   2. Letting_____have his own way.
   3. Treating_____as an adult.

   (b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

   (c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

   (d) What is the next most difficult situation?

(e) How is it difficult?

(f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

2. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage?
   1. Letting_____out of my sight.
   2. Getting_____out of my hair.
   3. Playing games with_____.

   (b) In what ways is that situation difficult to manage?

   (c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

   (d) What is the next most difficult situation?

   (e) How is it difficult?

   (f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

3. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage:
   1. Forcing_____to learn things he needs to know to get ahead and be successful.
   2. Showing affection (hugging, kissing, etc.) toward_____.
   3. Giving_____severe discipline (e.g., spanking, hitting, and other physical modes of punishment).

   (b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

   (c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

   (d) What is the next most difficult situation?

   (e) How is it difficult?

   (f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

4. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage:
   1. Keeping_____at home and out of dangerous activities.
   2. Treating_____as a small child or baby who doesn't know how to do much.
   3. Being patient and accepting of_____at all time.

   (b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

   (c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

   (d) What is the next most difficult situation?

   (e) How is it difficult?

   (f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

5. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage:
   1. Letting_____try all kinds of new things even though they may be a bit dangerous.

2. Letting_____run wild.
3. Letting_____know I love him.

(b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

(c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

(d) What is the next most difficult situation?

(e) How is it difficult?

(f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

6. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage?
   1. Having fun with_____.
   2. Understanding why_____makes so many mistakes.
   3. Being strict with_____.

(b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

(c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

(d) What is the next most difficult situation?

(e) How is it difficult?

(f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

7. (a) Which of the following three situations do you find most difficult to manage:
   1. Figuring out how to handle_____when he's bad.
   2. Getting_____to help around the house or yard.
   3. Getting_____to stop wetting his bed.

(b) In what way is that situation difficult to manage?

(c) How would you like to be able to handle that situation?

(d) What is the next most difficult situation?

(e) How is it difficult?

(f) How would you like to be able to manage this situation?

V. Vineland for Parents
(Use Child Vineland)

VI. Miscellaneous Questions

A. Squeeze Play

In this series of questions the interviewer is to focus upon the extent to which the subject child may have been deprived or short changed in being offered affection, warmth, love, hostility, coldness, etc., in a permissive, restrictive, etc., or any other particular atmosphere in comparison to his brothers and/or sisters.

Note: Use the following series of questions for parents with more than one child. Use series A_1 for parents with the subject child as their only child.

Questions for parents with more than one child

1. Do you think that there is any reason why _____(child's name) might have been treated differently by you or your husband (wife if S is the husband) than any of your other children when he was younger?

2. Do you or your husband treat _____ any differently than your other children right now?

2. If yes, probe as to how he or she was treated differently.

A_1. Squeeze Play (for parents whose only child is the subject child)

1. Did you or your husband treat_____any differently when he was younger than you treat him now?

2. What were the reasons for treating_____differently and how was he treated differently?

B. Here are some specific questions about how you treated_____when he was younger.

1a (HAND R LIST 1) Here are a number of things that some parents do when their child does something that they are glad he did. Please indicate how often you do these things.

1b. Now please go back and put a 1, 1, and 3 next to the most frequent ones. (TAKE BACK LIST 1 AND MAKE SURE R FOLLOWED INSTRUCTIONS CORRECTLY.)

2a. (HAND R LIST 1) Now think back to when _____was about two years old. Check what you usually did then when (HE) (SHE) did something that you were glad (HE) (SHE) did.

2b. Now please put a 1, 2, and 3 next to the most frequent ones. (TAKE BACK LIST 1 AND MAKE SURE R FOLLOWED INSTRUCTIONS CORRECTLY.)

3a. Now we have some questions that go back to _____'s infancy. It's very hard to remember that far back, but please try as well as you can. The first question is this. How did you feed _____right after (HE) (SHE) was born, was (HE) (SHE) breast fed or bottle fed?

____Breast fed ____Bottle fed

3b. (ONLY IF BREAST FED) About how old was (HE) (SHE) when you first began to train (HIM) (HER) to the bottle? (SHOULD NOT INCLUDE SUPPLEMENTARY BOTTLE). At what age was (HE) (SHE) fully trained to the bottle?

____Age in months when began training to bottle.

____Age in months when fully trained to bottle.

(MANY PARENTS MAY HAVE TROUBLE REMEMBERING AGES IN TERMS OF MONTHS OR YEARS. IT MAY HELP THEM IF YOU ASK QUESTIONS LIKE "WAS HE JUST SITTING UP OR BEGINNING TO WALK OR WHAT?" BUT ALWAYS TRY TO GET IT BACK TO MONTHS OR YEARS IF POSSIBLE.)

3c. About how old was (HE) (SHE) when you first began training (HIM) (HER) from the bottle to a cup or glass? About how old when (HE) (SHE) gave up the bottle entirely?

____Age in months when began training to cup or glass.

____Age in months when was fully trained to cup or glass.

4. Did you feed (HIM) (Her) at certain set times when (HE) (SHE) was a baby, or whenever (HE) (SHE) seemed to want to eat? (IF CERTAIN SET TIMES, ASK "WHEN")

5. Now let's talk about toilet training. About how old was_____when you first began doing something about toilet training? How old was_____when (HE) (SHE) was finally trained?

____Age in months when began toilet training.

____Age in months when toilet training completed.

____6. Was (HE) (SHE) a cuddly child? _____Yes _____No (IF R SAYS "YES," WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT SHE MEANS SO ASK "IN WHAT WAYS?"_

VIII. Disabuse Parents

While you were in the other room completing the various forms we were observing you from behind the pink picture (explain further if elaboration seems necessary). The necessity for doing this is probably apparent to you. We were trying to find out how the three of you interact when you're alone and this is the best way we could devise to study this sort of behavior without spending a lot of time in your home.

Now I have a few more questions:

A. Effect of suspicions about the lab.

1. Did you suspect you might be observed in such a way before you came here?

2. Did anything about the room cause you to suspect there might be a one-way mirror from which we were observing you?

3. (If answer to 2 is yes) What caused you to be suspicious and approximately when did this happen during the hour in the lab?

4. If parent knew he or she was being observed) How much was your behavior toward your child affected by your suspicions about the window? Describe in as much detail as possible the difference in the parent's behavior from what it might have been had they not been suspicious.

B. How typical was your behavior and that of _____(child's name) and that of your husband (or wife) during the time you were in the lounge?

(Probe for details of how and why behavior of each may have been different from their normal behavior.)

C. There were a few things I noticed while you were in the lab which I'd like to get a better idea of.